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Programme of activities of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

Status of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations

Report of the Secretary-General**

Summary

The previous biennial report of the Secretary-General on the status of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations (A/55/202), indicating the activities undertaken with the resources of the Fund and showing income and expenditure as well as the pledges and payments made to the Fund, was submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-fifth session. The present report updates the information contained in that report and reports on the fourteenth and fifteenth sessions of the Board of Trustees, held in 2001 and 2002 respectively.

* A/57/150.

** This report was submitted after 2 July 2002 so as to include as much updated information as possible.

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I. Mandate of the Fund

1. Convinced that the establishment of a voluntary trust fund would constitute a significant development for the future promotion and protection of the human rights of indigenous populations, the General Assembly, by resolution 40/131 of 13 December 1985, established the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations. The purpose of the Fund is to assist representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to participate in the deliberations of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights by providing them with financial assistance, funded by means of voluntary contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations and other private or public entities.

2. By resolution 50/156 of 21 December 1995, the General Assembly extended the mandate of the Fund by deciding that the Fund should also be used to assist representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to participate in the deliberations of the open-ended intersessional Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights charged with elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people, established by the Commission by its resolution 1995/32 of 3 March 1995 and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council by its resolution 1995/32 of 25 July 1995.

3. The General Assembly further extended the mandate of the Fund in its resolution 56/140 of 19 December 2001 by deciding that the Fund should be used to assist representatives of indigenous communities and organizations in attending, as observers, the sessions of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

II. Administration and Board of Trustees

4. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 40/131, the Fund is administered by the Secretary-General in accordance with the relevant financial rules and regulations of the United Nations on general trust funds for humanitarian assistance, through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, with the advice of a Board of Trustees.

5. The Board is composed of five persons with relevant experience in issues affecting indigenous populations, who serve in their personal capacity as United Nations experts. The Board members are appointed by the Secretary-General in consultation with the current Chairman of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, with due regard for equitable geographical distribution, for a renewable three-year term. At least one member is a representative of a widely recognized organization of indigenous populations.

6. The five members who have been appointed by the Secretary-General for a three-year term ending on 31 December 2002 are themselves indigenous experts: Victoria Tauli-Corpuz (Chairperson, Philippines), Michael Dodson (Australia), Naomi N. Kipuri (Kenya), José Carlos Morales (Costa Rica) and Tove Sovndahl Petersen (Greenland/Denmark).

III. Beneficiaries

7. The criteria for the selection of beneficiaries have been established by the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Secretary-General, upon the recommendation of the Board of Trustees (see annex).

IV. Grant cycle

A. Deadline for the receipt of new applications

8. Applications for travel grants to attend the 2003 sessions must be submitted by the established deadline of 1 October 2002 to allow for analysis by the secretariat of the Fund and Board. Admissible applications will be examined by the Board at its next session in 2003.

B. Admissibility of new applications

9. During the period between the receipt of the application and the next session of the Board, the secretariat of the Fund decides on the admissibility of applications on the basis of the mandate of the Fund.

C. Selection process

10. Admissible application forms are verified by the secretariat of the Fund as to their conformity with approved selection criteria, and additional information is requested from the organization if necessary. Reference organizations and specialized networks are also consulted if needed. The complete application form is then summarized and analysed by the secretariat in accordance with the selection criteria in a chart form to facilitate the work of the Board of Trustees.

11. At its annual session, the Board reviews all applications declared admissible, including the original application form, the analysis chart prepared by the secretariat and any other relevant information. The Board then makes recommendations to the Secretary-General in accordance with the guidelines of the Fund (annex).

12. After the session, the secretariat reviews all the Board's recommendations for consistency with relevant United Nations administrative and financial rules and regulations. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights approves, on behalf of the Secretary-General, the recommendations that are acceptable as well as new best practices identified during the annual session of the Board.

D. Travel grants

13. Approved travel grants include a roundtrip air ticket in economy class via the most direct route from the beneficiary's home town to Geneva or New York and back, which each beneficiary receives in his or her local travel agency, and a daily subsistence allowance for the days of the session, which they receive upon arrival in Geneva or New York.

E. Payment of grants

14. The beneficiaries are requested to approve all conditions attached to the grant such as participating in all meetings of the session. Upon receipt of this confirmation, the secretariat of the Fund requests the Office of the High Commissioner to prepare their travel promptly.

F. Monitoring

15. Travel grants are closely monitored before and during the sessions of the working groups and the Permanent Forum. Beneficiaries are requested to provide a copy of any statement delivered as part of their reporting obligations.

G. Evaluation by the Board and secretariat

16. At its annual session the Board reviews the status of all travel grants allocated in previous years.

17. Reference organizations and specialized networks may be invited for a hearing at the session of the Board to provide additional information on a specific organization, answer any questions put by the Board, explain their activities to the Board or respond in any other way required.

18. The Chairman, or another Board member if possible, attends the working group and the Permanent Forum sessions in order to meet with all beneficiaries present and to assess the impact of their participation on the deliberations of the session. During the working group and Permanent Forum, the secretariat of the Fund also closely monitors the implementation of the recommendations adopted by the Board.

H. Information flow

19. The secretariat of the Fund responds systematically to all correspondence received from organizations, first by acknowledging receipt of the application and if necessary requesting additional information to complete the application, and secondly, once the decisions have been approved, by informing all applicants of the result.

V. Payment of contributions

20. In order to meet the requirements of the grant cycle and to meet new requests for funding during a current year, new voluntary contributions should be paid to the Fund by the end of December in order to be duly recorded by the United Nations Treasurer well in advance of the annual session of the Board. Contributions that cannot be recorded before the session of the Board will be used at its next annual session.

VI. Fourteenth session of the Board of Trustees

21. During the seven meetings of its fourteenth session, held in Geneva from 28 to 30 March and on 2 April 2001, the Board of Trustees examined information prepared by its secretariat concerning the financial situation of the Fund; new contributions paid and pledges made by Governments since the thirteenth session; applications for new travel grants to attend the nineteenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations and applications for new travel grants to attend the seventh session of the working group to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people. The Board also met with representatives of donor Governments during its annual meeting with donors, as well as with the non-governmental organization Mandat International, based in Geneva, which is providing assistance to representatives of indigenous organizations and communities attending United Nations working groups. All recommendations made by the Board of Trustees were approved by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, on behalf of the Secretary-General, on 7 April 2001.

22. The following contributions were received in time for the allocation of travel grants at the fourteenth session of the Board:

State	*Amount (United States dollars)*	*Date received*
Cyprus	2 996	29 December 2000
Denmark	40 000	26 March 2001
Estonia	17 760	2 January 2001
Greece	6 000	19 December 2000
Holy See	1 000	26 December 2000
Netherlands	29 489	26 September 2000
Norway	55 163	28 March 2001
Switzerland	22 727	27 November 2000
Total	**175 135**[a]	

[a] After the session, a contribution from Finland amounting to 33,996 United States dollars (US$) was recorded on 20 April 2001 by the United Nations Treasurer.

23. The following pledges were made:

Country	*Amount in United States dollars*	*Date pledged*
Bolivia	1 000	2-3 November 1999[a]
Canada[b]	9 554	23 February 2001
Chile[c]	5 000	2-3 November 1999
	5 000	1-2 November 2000[d]
Total	**20 554**	

[a] Pledge made at the 1999 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities in New York.
[b] Amount is equal to 15,000 Canadian dollars (Can$).
[c] After the session, a contribution from Chile amounting to US$ 5,000 was recorded on 23 April 2001 by the United Nations Treasurer.
[d] Pledge made at the 2000 United Nations Pledging Conference for Development Activities in New York.

A. Implementation of recommendations adopted at the thirteenth session

24. The Board noted with satisfaction that all the recommendations adopted at its thirteenth session in 2000 (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2000/4) had been implemented by its secretariat.

B. Consideration of new applications for grants

25. The Board considered the following:

(a) Two hundred and twenty-five (225) admissible new applications for grants to cover travel and per diem expenses for representatives of indigenous organizations and communities to attend the nineteenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which took place from 23 to 27 July 2001:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	85	32	53
America	44	23	21
Asia	69	21	48
Europe	21	11	10
Oceania	6	4	2
Total	**225**	**91**	**134**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

(b) Thirty-two (32) admissible new applications for grants to cover travel and per diem expenses for representatives to attend the seventh session of the

working group to elaborate a draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous people, in October and November 2001:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	8	2	6
America	8	3	5
Asia	8	2	6
Europe	6	2	4
Oceania	2	1	1
Total	**32**	**10**	**22**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

C. Recommendations for grants

26. After having examined the applications in the light of the selection criteria (see annex), the Board recommended the following:

(a) Seventy-nine (79) travel grants to allow representatives of indigenous communities and organizations (for a list of beneficiaries, see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2001/4, annex IV) to attend the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, for a total amount of approximately US$ 321,700:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of beneficiaries*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	27	10	17
America	15	8	7
Asia	22	11	11
Europe	11	7	4
Oceania	4	3	1
Total	**79**	**39**	**40**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

(b) Twenty-three (23) travel grants to allow representatives of indigenous communities and organizations (for a list of beneficiaries see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2001/4, annex V) to attend the working group to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people, for a total amount of approximately US$ 110,200:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of beneficiaries*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	5	2	3
America	4	2	2
Asia	7	2	5
Europe	5	1	4
Oceania	2	1	1
Total	**23**	**8**	**15**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

VII. Inter-sessional consultations concerning the new mandate of the Fund (March 2002)

27. Following the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 56/140 of 19 December 2001, which expanded the mandate of the Fund, the secretariat of the Fund widely disseminated application forms to allow indigenous organizations and communities to present candidates to attend, as observers, the first session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in New York from 13 to 24 May 2002. The secretariat of the Fund received, analysed and adopted decisions on the admissibility of more than 400 applications received from indigenous organizations and communities for this purpose.

28. During intersessional consultations, the Board of Trustees considered 323 admissible applications. Taking into consideration the criteria for selection and the amount of money already approved in the cost plan for 2002 upon recommendations made by the Board at its fourteenth session (US$ 138,000) the Board recommended 25 travel grants. On behalf of the Secretary-General, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights approved these recommendations on 27 March 2002. The secretariat of the Fund and Board informed all the applicants of the decisions adopted on their applications (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2002/6, annex II, for the list of beneficiaries).

VIII. Fifteenth session of the Board of Trustees

29. During the six meetings of its fifteenth session, held in Geneva from 3 to 5 April 2002, the Board of Trustees examined information prepared by its secretariat concerning the financial situation of the Fund; new contributions paid and pledges made by Governments since the fourteenth session; applications for new travel grants to attend the twentieth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations; and applications for new travel grants to attend the eighth session of the working group to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people. The Board also met with representatives of donor Governments during its annual meeting with donors; specialized non-governmental organizations, the Indigenous Peoples' Centre for Documentation, Research and Information, Incomindios and the World Council of Churches; and a programme manager of the

United Nations Institute for Training and Research. The recommendations made by the Board of Trustees were approved by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on behalf of the Secretary-General on 17 April 2001.

30. The following contributions were paid in time for the fifteenth session of the Board:

State, non-governmental organization and individual	*Amount (United States dollars)*	*Date paid*[a]
Canada	9 530	6 April 2001
	18 826	1 February 2002
Chile	5 000	24 April 2000
	10 000	7 June 2001
Denmark	35 294	11 April 2002
Finland	33 996	20 April 2001
France	29 613	11 April 2001
Greece	6 300	16 August 2001
Holy See	1 000	14 January 2002
New Zealand	10 475	26 February 2002
Norway	56 642	12 March 2002
Switzerland	23 392	10 January 2002
Yorio Shiokawa	116	24 August 2001
Total	**240 184**	

[a] According to official receipt vouchers available at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

31. The following pledges were received in time for the fifteenth session of the Board:

State	*Amount (United States dollars)*	*Date pledged*
Bolivia	1 000	2-3 November 1999[a]
Chile	5 000	7-8 November 2001[b]
Cyprus	2 000	6 February 2002
Venezuela	5 000	7 November 2001
Total	**13 000**	

[a] Pledge made at the 1999 United Nations Pledging Conference on Development Activities in New York.

[b] Pledge made at the 2001 United Nations Pledging Conference on Development Activities in New York.

A. Implementation of the new mandate of the Fund on the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

32. The Board of Trustees noted with satisfaction that during the intersessional period its secretariat implemented the new mandate established by the General Assembly to enable 25 indigenous observers to attend the first session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, after a selection process and the screening of more than 400 applications. The Board appreciated that the High Commissioner for Human Rights immediately approved the recommendations on behalf of the Secretary-General and that the letters informing the beneficiaries had already been sent. This procedure was initiated and carried out in good time to the satisfaction of the Board.

33. The Board of Trustees recommended that the Bureau of the Permanent Forum at its first session in May 2002 should invite the Chairperson, or any other member of the Board or the secretariat of the Board and Fund who could be in New York during the session, to deliver a statement introducing the new mandate given to the Fund by the General Assembly in its resolution 56/140 of 19 December 2001 and providing information on its implementation.

34. The Board recommended that the Secretary-General report on the implementation of the new mandate in his biennial report to the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session and in a special report to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its first session.

B. Implementation of recommendations adopted at the fourteenth session

35. The Board noted with satisfaction that all the recommendations adopted at its fourteenth session in 2001 (see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2001/4) had been implemented by its secretariat.

C. Consideration of new applications for grants

36. The Board considered 232 new admissible applications for grants to cover travel and per diem expenses for representatives of indigenous organizations and communities to attend the twentieth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, which took place in Geneva from 22 to 26 July 2002:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	119	42	77
America	8	3	5
	36	13	23
Asia	48	15	33
Europe	20	10	10
Oceania	1	1	0
Total	**232**	**84**	**148**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

37. In addition, the Board considered 27 new admissible applications for grants to cover travel and per diem expenses for representatives to attend the eighth session of the working group to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people, scheduled to take place in Geneva from 2 to 13 December 2002:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	9	2	7
America	8	3	5
Asia	6	0	6
Europe	4	1	3
Oceania	0	0	0
Total	**27**	**6**	**21**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

D. Recommendations for grants

38. After having examined the applications in the light of the selection criteria (see annex), the Board recommended the following:

(a) Seventy-eight (78) travel grants to allow representatives of indigenous communities and organizations to attend the twentieth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, for a total amount of approximately US$ 305,000 (for the list of beneficiaries, see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2002/6, annex IV):

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	26	10	16
America	19	8	11
Asia	21	9	12
Europe	11	8	3
Oceania	1	1	0
Total	**78**	**36**	**43**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

(b) Sixteen (16) travel grants to allow representatives of indigenous communities and organizations (for the list of beneficiaries, see E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/2002/6, annex V) to attend the working group to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people, for a total amount of approximately US$ 71,525:

Geographical area[a]	*Number of applicants*	*Female*	*Male*
Africa	3	1	2
America	5	2	3
Asia	4	0	4
Europe	4	1	3
Total	**16**	**4**	**12**

[a] The geographical distribution reflects the applications received and not necessarily the geographical distribution in use by the United Nations Secretariat in United Nations legislative bodies.

39. The selection of beneficiaries reflects the admissible applications received, which might not be geographically balanced, as some countries submitted many applications and others submitted only a few, or none at all.

E. Other recommendations

40. The Board recommended to the Secretary-General the adoption of a new guideline according to which a recommendation in favour of an applicant to attend a session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues does not exclude another recommendation to attend a working group and vice versa.

41. The Board confirmed its practice and recommended to the Secretary-General to adopt a new selection criterion according to which the Board would give priority to applicants living in their own community and country over applicants living abroad.

42. The Board decided to implement strictly its guideline according to which it will not consider an application not supported by a letter of recommendation duly

signed by an executive of their indigenous organization. Furthermore, the Board recommended to the Secretary-General a new guideline according to which it will not examine a letter of support signed by the applicant herself/himself.

43. The secretariat and members of the Board attending a session of a working group or the Permanent Forum will try to meet with the beneficiaries and, if necessary, remind the beneficiaries of their obligation to participate fully in all meetings.

44. During the sessions of the working groups and the Permanent Forum, the secretariat should organize an information meeting with indigenous representatives to explain how to apply for travel grants from the Fund.

45. The Board suggested that the Working Group on Indigenous Populations should adopt its main theme for its two forthcoming sessions in order for the applicants to be better prepared to participate in its discussions.

F. Distribution of application forms

46. The Fund's application forms should be distributed as widely as possible. The Board members will also continue actively to distribute these application forms in their respective geographical areas.

47. The Board recommended that the deadline for submitting application forms to attend the Permanent Forum and the working groups should be 1 October.

G. Trends in new applications received

48. The Board discussed the balance to be observed in 2003 in allocating grants between the Permanent Forum and the working groups. This would take into consideration the number of admissible applications received in 2002, which reflected the following trends: a smaller number of applications were received for the working group to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people (27); more than 235 applications were received for the Working Group on Indigenous Populations; and, in a new development, a huge number of applications (more than 400) were received for the first session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, which indicated a high level of interest in attending.

H. Cost plan for 2003

49. The Board approved the revised cost plan for 2003 and recommended to the Secretary-General an increase in the amount of money allocated to beneficiaries of travel grants to attend the second session of the Permanent Forum, in view of the large number of applications received to attend its first session.

50. Taking into consideration the increased admissible number of applications to be reviewed by the Board and the new mandate given to the Board by the General Assembly, the Board recommended that two additional days for its annual session (currently three days) be scheduled for 2003.

51. For these reasons and taking also into consideration that the secretariat should have time to analyse and decide on the admissibility of applications to the second session of the Permanent Forum, which must be received before the deadline of 1 October, the Board considered that, to be able to review and adopt recommendations on all admissible applications in time, an additional session of three days should be scheduled at the end of February to discuss the allocation of travel grants for the Permanent Forum. The main session of the Board should continue to be held during the annual session of the Commission on Human Rights in order to enable the Board to implement its fund-raising mandate and to meet with donors.

I. Fund raising

52. The Board members met informally with donors during the annual session of the Commission on Human Rights and expressed appreciation to regular and new donors to the Fund.

53. The Board confirmed its practice of meeting each year with donors on the last day of its session.

54. Board members recommended to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to send a letter to donors in September 2002 appealing for additional contributions to be paid before its next session in order to allow the Board to increase further the number of grants and the representation of indigenous communities and organizations in 2003.

55. The Board recommended that the Bureau of the Commission on Human Rights at its regular session should continue to invite the Chairperson, or any other member of the Board who could be in Geneva during the session of the Commission, to deliver a statement that would introduce the report on the Board's session, report on the implementation of the decisions of the Secretary-General, provide an overview of the needs of the Fund and make an appeal for new contributions.

56. Having met with the non-governmental organizations, which provide assistance to representatives of indigenous communities and organizations attending the working group, as well as with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, the Board recommended that the secretariat continue its cooperation with these and other organizations.

J. Dates of the sixteenth session

57. The Board recommended that its sixteenth session should be scheduled prior to the consideration by the Commission on Human Rights of the relevant item on indigenous populations; if possible, from 31 March to 4 April 2003.

IX. Implementation of decisions concerning travel grants

58. The secretariat of the Fund reports to the Board of Trustees at each annual session on the implementation of all decisions made at its previous session and approved by the Secretary-General. The Board reviews the implementation of those decisions and the secretariat reports annually on their implementation to the General

Assembly, within the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, to the Commission on Human Rights and to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The main report by the Secretary-General to the General Assembly is the present biennial report.

59. Some beneficiaries of the Fund may not be able to attend the sessions of the working groups or the Permanent Forum owing to personal reasons. In such cases, upon being informed, the secretariat of the Fund requests that the grant be cancelled. The money is then available in the Fund for allocation the following year.

60. A high percentage of beneficiaries attend the sessions. For example, out of the 79 beneficiaries who were given a travel grant to attend the nineteenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations in 2001, a total of 64 (81 per cent) of them attended the session and 15 (19 per cent) were not able to attend. Out of the 23 beneficiaries who were given a travel grant to attend the working group on the draft declaration, 21 attended (91 per cent) and 2 (9 per cent) were not able to attend. The money initially allocated for the grants to beneficiaries who were unable to attend was therefore part of the balance available for the Fund in 2002.

61. Of the 25 beneficiaries of travel grants to attend the first session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, only 2 were unable to attend the session.

62. The decisions on the allocation of travel grants are made on the basis of the applications received from individuals; therefore, the grants are awarded to the person who applied. If the beneficiary of a grant is not able to attend a given session, on an exceptional basis and time permitting, the secretariat may approve the replacement of the beneficiary. In such a case, the secretariat requests a duly signed letter from the beneficiary and from an executive of the organization as well as from the person proposed to replace the beneficiary. The secretariat will also request that the person proposed to replace the beneficiary fill in a new application form. Once all these requirements are met, the secretariat will inform the Chairperson of the Board who, during the intersessional period, takes such decisions, with the advice of the member of the Board from the relevant geographical region, if needed.

X. Trends over the period 2001-2002

A. Annual increase in the amount of applications received to attend the working groups

63. The Board of Trustees noted with satisfaction at its annual sessions the increase in the number of admissible applications received over the years from indigenous communities and organizations worldwide to attend the two working groups, as shown in the table below. The table shows the substantial increase from 1997 (52 applications) as compared with 2002 (259 applications).

Working groups	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Working Group on Indigenous Populations	47	72	220	119	225	232
Working group to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people	5	3	20	36	32	27
Total	**52**	**75**	**240**	**155**	**257**	**259**

64. Every year, in addition to admissible applications to attend the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the secretariat receives more than 70 applications that are not admissible as they are not complete, do not fall within the mandate of the Fund or are received after the established deadline.

65. The secretariat also receives more than 50 applications annually to attend the working group to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people that are not admissible for the reasons mentioned above or because the organizations do not have consultative status with the ECOSOC or are not authorized to attend this working group by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations in accordance with the procedure established by the Commission on Human Rights in its resolution 1995/32.

B. Extension of the mandate of the Fund by the General Assembly: new applications received

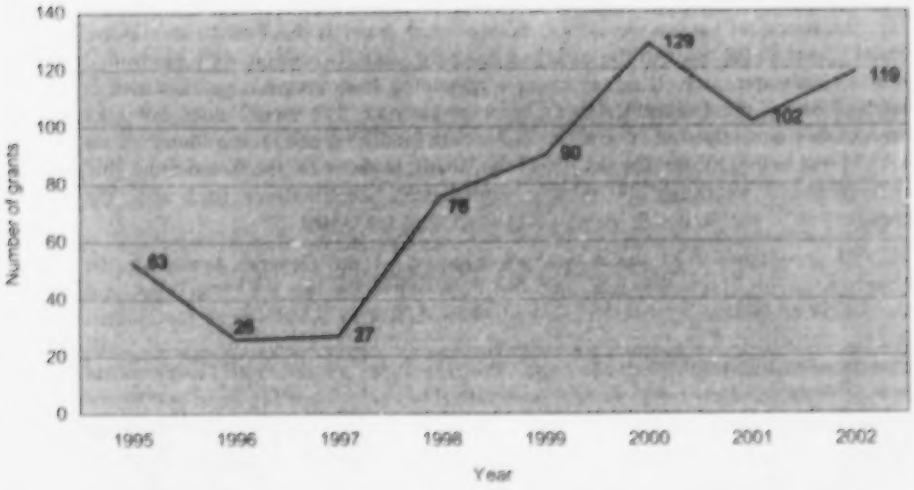
66. In the year 2002, as the mandate of the Fund was extended by General Assembly resolution 56/140 of 19 December 2001, the secretariat received more than 400 applications to attend the first session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Upon analysis of all these applications according to the selection criteria approved by the Board, 323 applications were declared admissible.

67. As a result of the new mandate given to the Fund and of the large number of new applications received to attend the Permanent Forum, the Board of Trustees discussed the balance to be observed in 2003 in allocating grants between the Forum and the working groups to meet the demand properly.

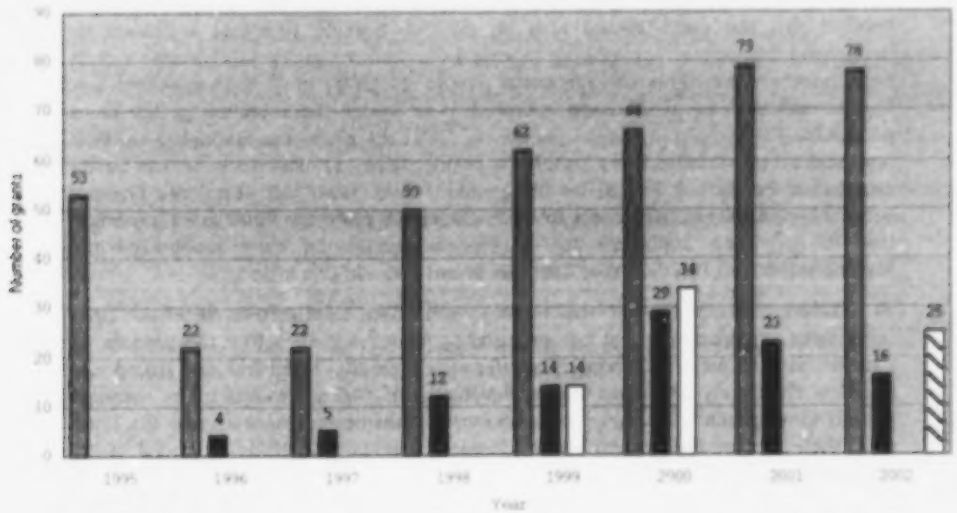
68. The Board recommended that two additional working days be scheduled in 2003 for its annual session (currently three days) to take into consideration the increase in the number of applications to be examined. Additionally, the Board recommended an additional session of three days to be scheduled at the end of February to adopt recommendations on the allocation of travel grants for the Permanent Forum.

C. Annual allocation of travel grants

69. As mentioned in paragraphs 63-66, the demand for travel grants from indigenous organizations and communities increases every year, and the Fund and Board must respond properly to this demand. In 2002 the secretariat received a total of 582 admissible applications (to attend the two working groups and the Permanent Forum). With the resources available, it was able to allocate only 119 travel grants. Between 1995 and 2002 the Fund allocated grants as illustrated in the chart below:



70. The distribution of grants between 1995 and 2002 by session is represented as follows:



D. Contributions received by the Fund

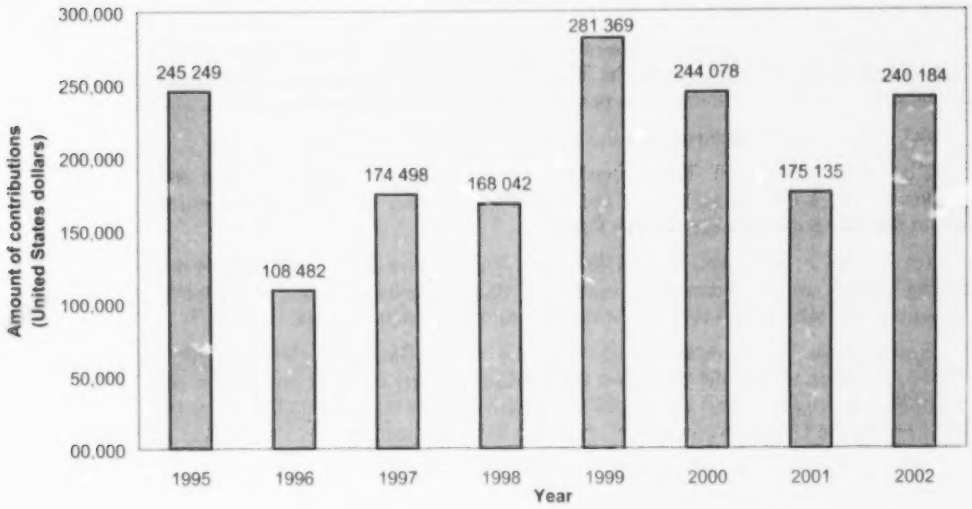
71. As stated on various occasions, at its annual sessions the Board can allocate travel grants on the basis of the contributions paid and duly registered by the United Nations Treasurer, as well as any balance remaining from previous years, which is established by the United Nations Office at Geneva. The Board does not take pledges into consideration. Therefore, donors are kindly invited to pay contributions to the Fund before the annual session of the Board, in order for the Board to be able to recommend allocating the money immediately. Contributions paid after the session will be available only for the next session of the Board.

72. In accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Commission on Human Rights and the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, on behalf of the Secretary-General, annually sends a letter of appeal to all Governments to contribute to the Fund. The resolutions appeal to all Governments to contribute regularly to the Fund, on an annual basis, to allow the Fund and Board to fulfil their mandate effectively and to meet the increasing needs of indigenous people.

73. Since the creation of the Fund in 1985, its mandate has been expanded three times to meet the developments and changing realities of the United Nations system and indigenous peoples. The Fund's Board and secretariat have reacted immediately to those new challenges to enable indigenous people to benefit from each new mandate with the support of the donors to the Fund. In 1995, the General Assembly decided that the Fund should also be used to provide financial assistance to indigenous representatives wishing to attend the working group to elaborate a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people. In 1998, the Fund's mandate was further enlarged by the General Assembly to assist the working group on a permanent forum for indigenous people. In 2001, the Fund was mandated to assist representatives of indigenous people in participating, as observers, in the newly established Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Over the years, the General Assembly and the regular donors to the Fund have viewed the Fund as an important tool in providing assistance to indigenous people and have recognized the accomplishments of its Board of Trustees in carrying out this task.

74. When the mandate of the Fund is extended, applications received from indigenous organizations and communities increase, and therefore the amount of contributions to meet this demand should also increase. The Fund and Board can function effectively and meet all the developments and extensions of its mandate only if Governments that have not previously contributed financially to the Fund offer their support and regular donors increase their contributions, as stated in the resolutions of the General Assembly.

75. The Fund received the following contributions between 1995 and 2002:



E. Annual expenditure

76. In accordance with its mandate, the only expenditures encumbered annually under the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations are travel grants for indigenous representatives to attend the two relevant working groups and the Permanent Forum (since 2002). A small amount of money (about US$ 30,000) is allocated every year for the organization of the session of the Board of Trustees in Geneva.

77. Additionally, in accordance with the United Nations financial rules and regulations governing the general trust funds for humanitarian assistance, 13 per cent of the envisaged expenditure is set aside to cover programme support costs and 15 per cent for the operating cash reserve.

Annex

Criteria for the selection of beneficiaries

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 40/131, the only beneficiaries of assistance from the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations shall be representatives of indigenous people's organizations and communities:

(a) Who are so considered by the Board of Trustees;

(b) Who would not, in the opinion of the Board, be able to attend the sessions of the working groups or the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues without the assistance provided by the Fund;

(c) Who would be able to contribute to a deeper knowledge on the part of the working groups or the Permanent Forum of the problems affecting indigenous populations and who would secure a broad geographical representation.

Furthermore, in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1995/32, in order to be able to attend the working groups of the Commission on Human Rights, organizations must hold consultative status with the ECOSOC or be authorized by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations.

In addition, the Secretary-General approved the following criteria upon recommendation by the Board:

(a) The representatives and the organizations applying for a grant should be indigenous;

(b) The Board does not consider applicants who do not provide a letter of support signed by an executive of their indigenous organization nor an applicant who is not an indigenous person;

(c) The Board considers a maximum of two applicants per organization;

(d) Applicants are requested to submit application forms and recommendation letters in the working languages of the Board's secretariat (English, French or Spanish);

(e) The Board selects representatives who have never participated in a session of a working group or the Permanent Forum as well as those who have already participated and could develop specialized capacity and strengthen the core group of participants in a working group or the Permanent Forum;

(f) The Board encourages indigenous organizations and communities to consider gender balance and, if possible, nominate one woman and one man;

(g) The Board encourages indigenous organizations and communities to consider nominating young persons;

(h) The Board encourages the former beneficiaries of the Indigenous Fellowship Programme of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner on Human Rights to apply for grants to represent their indigenous organization or community at sessions of the working groups or Permanent Forum by sending duly completed application forms and meeting all the criteria for selection;

(i) Applicants are requested to indicate their responsibility in their organization or community;

(j) Applicants to the session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations are requested to refer in their statements to the specific theme of the year.